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SOME DEFINITE ACHIEVEMENTS IN VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

By ROY H. THOMAS
Sueprvisor of Agricultural Education for North Carolina

THE teaching of vocational agriculture in secondary schools in North Carolina is bringing definite results. A brief survey of the project work for 1918-1919 and other activities for the year 1919-20 will give some idea of the work being done in agricultural schools.

Vocational agriculture was taught in eighteen white and seven colored schools in 1918-19 with a total enrollment of 325 pupils. In 1919-20 thirty-one white and eleven colored schools, with an enrollment of 734 pupils, were in operation. Indications are that fifty-two schools,—thirty-four white and eighteen colored—will be in operation this fall. The starting of new schools is limited only by the supply of properly qualified teachers.

Interesting and instructive results were obtained from the home project or supervised home practical work which is part of the work and instruction of each pupil taking agriculture:

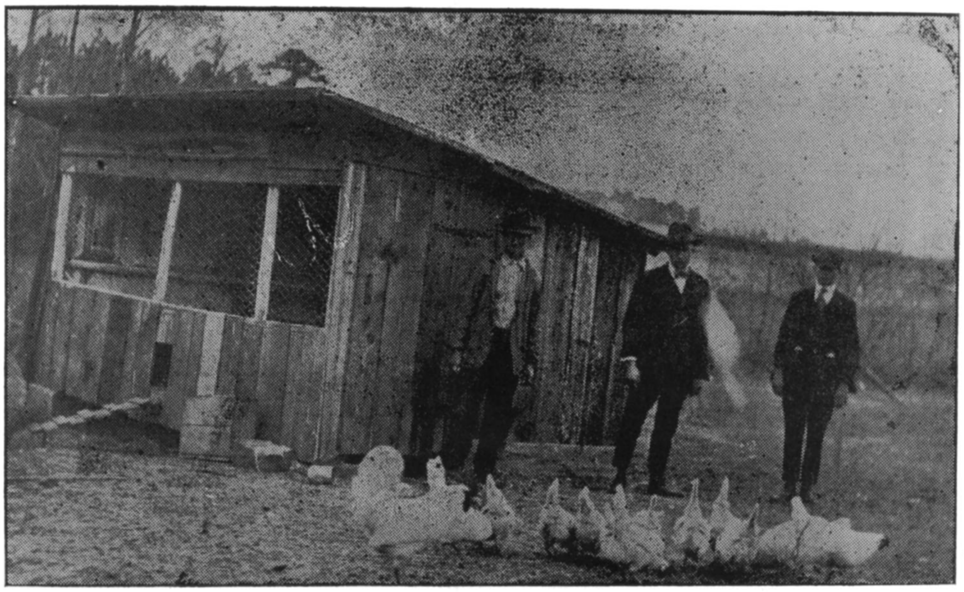
1. In 1918-19 the 325 pupils made a total net profit of $41,480.85 from their home project work. This amount is several thousand dollars in excess of the cost of agricultural instruction in these schools. Figures show that for each dollar invested in agricultural education there was an income of $1.41 from the home project work. The home project work for this year involved the growing of 677 acres of crops and caring for 472 animals according to scientific methods under the supervision of the teacher of agriculture. This year 734 pupils are growing 856 acres of crops and managing 4,244 animals.

2. The project income per pupil in North Carolina for 1918-19 was greater than that of any other Southern State. The average net increase per pupil was $150.43. Tobacco was the most profitable crop grown. The average net income of pupils having tobacco projects was $465.27. Peanuts stood second with an income of $225.96 and cotton third with an income of $157.77.

3. The average income per unit of crops was greater in North Carolina than that of any Southern State.

4. North Carolina also ranks ahead of all Southern States when comparing the number of pupils who completed the required work with the number enrolled. Of the 368 enrolled in 1918-19, 325 completed the work.

It must not be inferred from the citation of these results that the financial aim dominates the agricultural



Pupil, teacher and parent discussing plans for handling the boy's poultry project. The interest and hearty co-operation of the triumvirate—boy, teacher, father—spells success in vocational agriculture.

instruction. It does not. There are three parallel phases of the agricultural instruction: classroom work, home project work, and shop work. Thus, the home project work represents only one phase. The results of the project work are given primarily to show that the motto of the agricultural school, "Learning and Earning," is an appropriate term. Furthermore, any type of education that can show an immediate return of $1.41 for each dollar invested is worthy of consideration.

The percentage of pupils who finish the year's work is greater in the agricultural department than in other departments of the same schools.

The following tabulation gives information on the kind, size and income from projects:

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1918-19

Name of Project	No. Enrolled	No. Completed	Total Scope	Students Project Income		Total	Income per Acre or Animal	Ir
				Net Profit	Paid Self for Labor			
Corn	86	83	132	$ 4,613.50	$1,476.40	$ 6,089.90	$ 46.13	$ 73.37
Cotton	37	34	46	4,519.55	844.62	5,364.17	116.61	157.77
Tobacco	33	31	45	13,395.09	1,028.49	14,423.58	320.52	465.27
Wheat	1	1	1	86.00	12.25	98.25	98.25	98.25
Garden	3	2	2	90.88	11.75	102.63	51.31	51.31
Sweet Potatoes	2	2	2	292.67	28.90	321.57	160.78	160.78
Irish Potatoes	2	2	½	36.45	5.10	41.55	83.10	20.77
Peanuts	5	3	4	641.91	35.87	677.78	169.44	225.92
General Crops	2	2	94	517.75	215.25	733.00	7.79	366.50
Orchard	2	2	3	42.30	28.20	70.50	23.50	35.25
Terracing, draining	2	2	223	360.00	90.00	450.00	2.01	225.00
Total	175	164	552	$24,506.10	$3,776.83	$28,372.93		
Cows	8	5	8	$ 262.20	$ 173.35	$ 435.55	$ 54.44	$ 87.11
Poultry	13	11	369	335.56	146.23	481.79	1.30	43.79
Bees	1	1	3	31.19	1.00	32.19	10.73	32.19
Brood Sows	30	28	29	1,586.98	296.20	1,883.18	64.93	67.25
Hogs	15	13	63	1,617.64	572.17	2,189.81	34.75	168.44
Total	67	58	472	$ 3,833.57	$1,188.95	$ 5,022.52		
Total of Crops and Animals	242	222	1024	$28,429.67	$4,965.78	$33,395.45		

Average income per acre in crops	$ 51.40
Average income per pupil in crops	173.00
Average income per animal	10.64
Average income per pupil per crop and animal	150.43

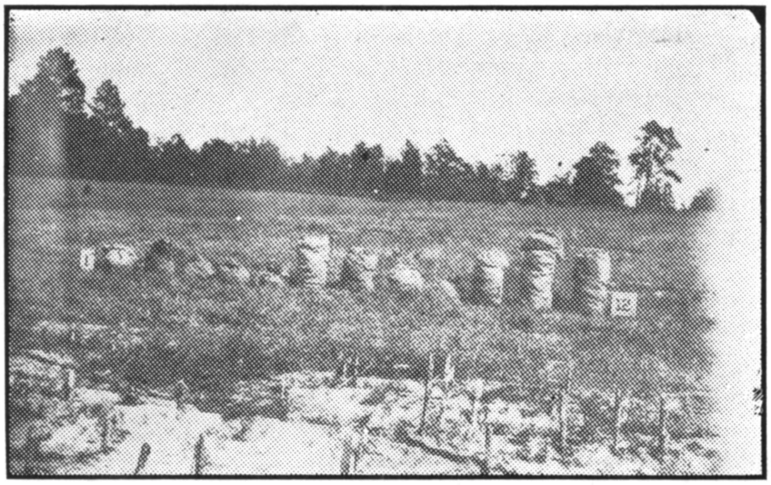
The amount and variety of community service activities reported by the schools indicates that the people of the communities in which the schools are located have been given valuable advice and assistance. Reports show that last year 774 individual farmers were given advice and assistance on various farm problems. These community activities cover problems arising from every phase of farm work. In general the community activities include such as the following: pruning and spraying, seed selection and treatment, control of insects and diseases, methods of cultivation, harvesting and marketing crops, feeding and managing animals, use of fertilizers, terracing, drainage, designs for farm buildings, installation of water and light systems, organizing, buying and selling associations, conducting community fairs, etc.

Records show that 248 meetings with a total attendance of 34,547 people were held to discuss agricultural problems needing attention in the various communities. Eighteen schools held community fairs last fall with a total attendance of 10,800 people.

For the purpose of adapting the work of each school more nearly to the needs of its community each teacher made a survey of the farms in his school district last spring. This survey secured detailed information on crops, animals, yields, cost of production, yearly receipts, farm machinery, farm practice, and other data concerning local farming conditions. The information gained from this survey is used as the basis for organizing the course of instruction in agriculture. Dr. E. C. Brooks, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, said, "The making of this survey is the best single piece of work in North Carolina educational history."

Another type of work of the agricultural schools which means a whole lot to the future development of the livestock industry of the State was the participation of agricultural students in State and National Livestock Judging Contests last fall. Eighty-five students from as many different communities and representing twelve schools took part in the judging contests at the State Livestock Association Meeting in Goldsboro. A judging team from the Cary Agricultural School represented North Carolina at the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago. This team won eighth place in the team contests, and one member won first place in judging beef cattle. We may expect these boys to be the strongest advocates of better livestock in their respective communities.

"Learning by doing." Agricultural pupils building a model poultry house.



Determining the varieties of crops best adapted to the community and the proper kind and amount of fertilizer to be used, is a part of the work of an agricultural school. No chance of mistaking the results of this corn fertilizer demonstration.

For the purpose of finding out what people in the communities in which these schools are located think of the value of the agricultural instruction, a questionnaire was sent to six men in each community. One hundred and eighty replies were received. The only criticism made was of a constructive nature to the effect: "We want more of such schools."

One man wrote, "If this course continues to be taught for the next five years as it has been this year, it will revolutionize farm life." Another patron stated, "It is helping my boy to become a better farmer and every other boy who is taking the course. It is the means of keeping more boys on the farm." A superintendent of schools gave the following expression: "I have never seen a more successful venture in the school business than the vocational work."

"Children born in the country are entitled to as much freedom of choice of occupation as are those brought up in town and are entitled to as substantial help from the public schools in making an intelligent choice. Besides if we should put to use the rural schools as a means of forcing country children to stay on the farm we would meet with failure. Every effort along this line which has ignored the fundamental principle of equality of opportunity has been futile.

"Indeed, I think it may be accepted as axiomatic that the intelligence of the people on the farm in any country finally is directly related to the income derived from the farming business as compared with that from similar enterprises in the same community. People will stay on the farms if the opportunities are as good in agriculture as in other industries. If the opportunities are not as good the intelligent and ambitious will leave the farm. In a word, if farming is allowed to become unprofitable as compared with other occupations it will be given over to a less efficient class than that which now tills our soil."—Henry J. Walters.

If we hope to perpetuate America we must Americanize America and teach America to direct its prosperity into individual and national substantiality and growth.